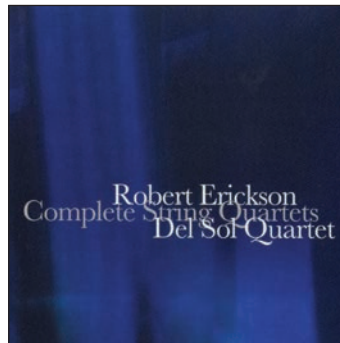


# BBC music

2014 October



**REFINED TONES:**  
Del Sol play  
Erickson's quartets



## ERICKSON

**String Quartet No. 1; String Quartet No. 2; Solstice; Corfu**

Del Sol Quartet

New World Records 80753-2

83:39 mins (2 discs)

Available at [arkivmusic.com/bbcmusic](http://arkivmusic.com/bbcmusic)

There's visceral rhythmic excitement in the opening movement of the First Quartet, written when the composer was in his early thirties. He plainly knew his Berg, and there's a similarly enigmatic relationship with tonality, although the language is more linear and austere. What could be a dry piece is lifted off the page by the passionate advocacy of the Del Sol Quartet, who bring accuracy and tonal refinement to the music, enhanced by the lively recording. In the one-movement Second Quartet, contrapuntal writing gives way to something more free-flowing and lyrical, and a wider range of sonorities. The question does niggle as to whether it's coherent enough to be memorable, but again it's given a performance which tends to sweep such cavils aside.

The Third Quartet, *Solstice*, comes from almost 30 years later, and the language is more tonally based, with repetitive rhythmic phrases based around drones, sometimes quite oriental sounding. It's immediately appealing, and just as you've had enough of one musical gesture or texture, another comes along. Much of the allure comes from the controlled, spacious performance, and that's also apparent in the Fourth Quartet, *Corfu*. Written shortly after *Solstice*, it's even slower, and more ecstatic in its wide-ranging, often modal lines. Worth exploring.

Martin Cotton

PERFORMANCE

★★★★★

RECORDING

★★★★★

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Performance ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Recording ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

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